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She received no response, and went on again—"Does not Benjamin again and again entreat you to tell him what to do! What more can you ask?"

The apprehension and capability that do not require to be taught—when we must tell our friend the way to please us, we are indeed put to a sad extremity.

When Benjamin had left the house, the two women sat a good while without speaking—Aunt Dorcas rocking to and fro, and Winifred combing her long hair with her fingers, like one who is half crazed.

"My child," said the old woman, at last, and speaking in tones softer and more subdued than was her custom—"I think I understand how it is with you: your heart does not sanction your judgment, and the will of your father."

Winifred pushed her hair from her eyes, and bent forward, eagerly—she was not quite sure that she had heard aright.

"Well," continued Aunt Dorcas, "there is no accounting for the election and reprobation of the heart—that is certain."

Her chair was quite still now, and her gray head nodding in confirmation of what she had said.

Winifred did not speak, lest she should break up the ground of sympathy, upon which they seemed by accident, as it were, to have fallen.

"The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away," ejaculated Aunt Dorcas, presently; and, as if in continuance of some secret train of meditation, "blessed be the name of the Lord."

"Perhaps," mused Winifred, "she has herself loved some one at some time; and the smile that is brightening her withered face reaches away back to some moonlight night of summer, when, under the soft confusions of the leaves she listened to softer whispers—when no shadow lay between promise and fulfilment, and only a little piece of starry sky was between her and heaven."

In confirmation of this fancy, Aunt Dorcas just then took up one withered hand in the other, and, backward and forward, along the wrinkled finger that would scarcely hold it on any more, slipped the thin and almost worn-out ring.

By degrees, a soothing and soft atmosphere filled all the room, and with no sound disturbing the silence louder than

the chirp of a cricket, or the ticking of the clock, the hours went and came—the two women scarcely glancing at one another—perhaps hardly aware of each other's presence—both away in those visionary fields into which the soul sometimes wanders, forgetful of the dust and noise of the common world.

It was not often that peace brooded so sweetly over the hearthstone by which they sat—the time was felt to be precious, and the embers were dead, and the ashes about them cold, before they separated for the night.

[To be concluded in next No.]

#### THE MIND'S POSSESSIONS.

By Phebe Cary.

THERE is no comfort in the world  
But I, in thought, have known,  
No bliss for any human heart

I cannot dream my own;  
And fancied joys may often be  
More real than reality.

I have a house in which to live,  
Not grand, but very good,  
A hearth-fire always warm and bright,  
A board with daintiest food;  
And I, when tired with care or doubt,  
Go in and shut my sorrows out.

I have a father, one whose thought  
Goes with me when I roam;  
A mother, watching in some door  
To see her child come home;  
And sisters, in whose dear eyes shine  
Such fondness, looking into mine.

I have a friend, who sees in me  
What none beside can see,  
Who, looking kindly on me, says,  
"Dear, you are dear to me!"  
A friend, whose smile is never dim,  
And I can never change to him.

My boys are very gentle boys,  
And when I see them grown,  
They're truer, braver, nobler men  
Than any I have known;  
And all my girls are fair and good,  
From infancy to womanhood.

So, with few blessings men can see,  
Or I, myself, could name,  
Home, love, and all that love can bring,  
My mind has power to claim;  
And life can never cease to be  
A good and pleasant thing to me.

Now let me liken this "great miracle":—  
The Soul's deep sea, stirred by Emotion's storms,  
Is ploughed by thoughts whose grand proportions tell,  
Like some Great Eastern, on the ages' forms,  
And bear upon their breath the power to make  
Kings, princes, peoples, a new life to take.

O. J. V.

#### THREE SKETCHES FROM THE VALLEY OF VIRGINIA.

By John Esten Cooke

##### I.

###### GREENWAY COURT.

FOR the traveller, lie open two distinct and breathing worlds: the world of the Present and the world of the Past.

The lovers of the Present find their chief enjoyment in visiting great cities, or splendid libraries and famous galleries of pictures, in the pageantry and grandeur of imperial palaces and world renowned "objects of interest." The devotees of the Past would rather linger on the spot where great men fought for a great cause—dream away silent hours in the old house which sheltered the head of a hero—would rather hear the eloquent and noble voices of another age, though only in the imagination, than listen to the loudest utterances of the Present.

In Virginia, there are many spots curiously connected with our history, filled for him who possesses this secret with the deepest interest. They do not obtrude themselves, however; they seem to retire, as it were, beneath the boughs of the forest, dreading, like Hamlet, to be "too much i' the sun." The explorer must carefully seek them, but once found, they reward the student or the dreamer with what noble and suggestive pictures of the fruitful Past! Every stone is a memorial, every timber supports a legend. Could these old walls speak, they would tell us what the fathers of the Republic said and did—we would live again in the great days of those almost unknown ages, the ages of the Revolution and the Colonial regime.

Not far from the spot whence I send you these hasty lines, lived a man who exerted a marked influence upon the destiny of George Washington, and thus upon the fate of North America. I refer to "Greenway Court," the farmer residence of Thomas Lord Fairfax, Baron of Cameron. It is an old house, with a long verandah, dormer windows, and low chimneys. Upon the roof are perched two belfries, which once contained bells, I believe, but for what purpose cannot now be easily discovered. Perhaps they were used to assemble the numerous retainers